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ABSTRACT

This document presents a summary of the purpose, activities, and findings of the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education, focusing on the Commission's Final report "A Call for Change in Teacher Education." The report was organized around five themes: (1) supply and demand for quality teachers; (2) programs for teacher education; (3) accountability for teacher education; (4) resources for teacher education; and (5) conditions necessary to support the highest quality of teaching. Commission recommendations in the following areas are briefly summarized: (1) admission to and graduation from teacher education programs; (2) responsibilities of states in teacher recruitment; (3) attracting capable minority teachers; (4) basic content of teacher education programs; (5) teacher certification; (6) experimental teacher education programs; (7) state responsibility in certification and program approval; (8) establishment of state standards for teacher education; (9) locale of teacher education programs; (10) resources for teacher education; (11) government role in educational research; (12) establishment of a National Academy for Teacher Education; (13) teachers' salaries; (14) teachers' working conditions; (15) professional development for teachers; and (16) administrator education. (JD)

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. The National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education.

FINAL REPORT FOR NIE GRANT #NIE-G-84-0016

Robert L. Egbert

Introduction

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, with some financial assistance from a grant from discretionary funds available to the United States Secretary of Education, formed a National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education in March 1984. Dr. C. Peter Magrath, then president of the University of Minnesota and now president of the University of Missouri, chaired the Commission. Other members represented various constituent groups including college and university presidents, teacher educators, teacher and administrator organizations, state and federal legislators, governors, local school boards, and chief state school officers. (See pp. IV-V of A Call for Change in Teacher Education for a complete listing of Commission members.) The Commission completed its work and made its report in February 1985.

Purpose

The central objective of the Commission, as stated by Dr. Magrath was "(t)o improve the quality of teacher education in the U.S. The underlying premise is that excellence breeds excellence, and mediocrity spawns mediocrity. Without a commitment to the former we run the risk of insuring the latter--a risk that the U.S. can ill afford to take." (National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education, 1984--Preface)

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Activities

The Commission met three times, commissioned and studied a number of papers, held five regional hearings, and prepared a report--A Call for Change in Teacher Education. Each regional hearing consisted of three, half-day sessions. The first half day was a seminar at which invited scholars presented papers, organized around a central theme, which they then discussed with Commission members and others. During the second session, Commission members either visited teacher education programs or held discussions with teacher educators who came to the Commission's meeting place. The third half day was devoted to an open hearing at which anyone could make a statement about teacher education. (See A Call for Change p. 43 for a list of seminar themes and related activities, pp. 44-46 for a list of all papers prepared for the Commission, and pp. 47-53 for the names of those who gave testimony at the open hearings.)

The Commission's report was prepared over approximately a three month period during which staff members prepared successive drafts which they took to Commission meetings for discussion and revision. Between meetings, Commission members individually edited and commented on additional drafts.

Report - Content

Summary of Commission Report

The report is organized around five themes: (1) supply and demand for quality teachers, (2) programs for teacher education, (3) accountability for teacher education, (4) resources for

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teacher education, and (5) conditions necessary to support the highest quality of teaching. Each theme is discussed, along with selected findings, and recommendations are presented at the close of each section.

Recommendations in the Report

The following are the sixteen recommendations contained in the Commission's report. Each of these recommendations has either policy or action implications for one or another level of government or college/university administration.

RECOMMENDATION 1: ADMISSION TO AND GRADUATION FROM TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHOULD BE BASED UPON RIGOROUS ACADEMIC AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.

RECOMMENDATION 2: THE STATES, IN CONCERT WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, SHOULD LAUNCH A NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN TO RECRUIT QUALIFIED CANDIDATES INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

RECOMMENDATION 3: SPECIAL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO ATTRACT CAPABLE MINORITY TEACHER CANDIDATES.

RECOMMENDATION 4: EACH TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM SHOULD BE AN EXACTING, INTELLECTUALLY CHALLENGING INTEGRATION OF LIBERAL STUDIES, SUBJECT SPECIALIZATION FROM WHICH SCHOOL CURRICULA ARE DRAWN, AND CONTENT AND SKILLS OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION.

RECOMMENDATION 5: FOLLOWING THEIR COMPLETION OF A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM AND THE AWARDING OF A PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATE, NEW TEACHERS SHOULD COMPLETE AN INDUCTION PERIOD OR INTERNSHIP OF AT LEAST A YEAR'S DURATION FOR WHICH COMPENSATION IS PROVIDED.

RECOMMENDATION 6: STATES SHOULD ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF EXPERIMENTAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

RECOMMENDATION 7: CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM APPROVAL STANDARDS AND DECISIONS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE STATE RESPONSIBILITIES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PROFESSION.

RECOMMENDATION 8: STATES SHOULD MAINTAIN AND STRICTLY ENFORCE RIGOROUS STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW. VOLUNTARY NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED AND MADE TO SERVE AS A MEANS FOR IMPROVING TEACHER EDUCATION.

RECOMMENDATION 9: TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE LOCATED IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

RECOMMENDATION 10: SUFFICIENT RESOURCES MUST BE ASSIGNED TO TEACHER EDUCATION TO PROVIDE THOROUGH, RIGOROUS PROGRAMS.

RECOMMENDATION 11: FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD PROVIDE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION, AND USE OF RESEARCH INFORMATION IN EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION.

RECOMMENDATION 12: A NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED, TO WHICH PROMISING TEACHER EDUCATORS COULD BE NOMINATED FOR POSTGRADUATE TRAINEESHIPS.

RECOMMENDATION 13: TEACHERS' SALARIES SHOULD BE INCREASED AT THE BEGINNING OF AND THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREERS TO LEVELS COMMENSURATE WITH OTHER PROFESSIONS REQUIRING COMPARABLE TRAINING AND EXPERTISE.

RECOMMENDATION 14: TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS SHOULD BE COMMENSURATE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB.

RECOMMENDATION 15: TEACHERS SHOULD BE PROVIDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND INCENTIVES SO THAT THEY CAN CONSISTENTLY IMPROVE THEIR PRACTICE.

RECOMMENDATION 16: ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION SHOULD BE EXTENDED, FOCUSING ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ON THE CREATION OF CONDITIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FOR TEACHERS.

Research Comments in Recommendations

Although the Commission report recommendations all contain suggestions for policy and/or action, two of them also explicitly mention research or contain research related words.

Recommendation Six--States should encourage and assist the development and evaluation of experimental teacher education programs.

Recommendation Eleven--Federal and state governments should provide support and encouragement for the further development, dissemination, and use of research information in education and teacher education.

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In addition to these direct references, Recommendation Twelve, which suggests a National Academy for Teacher Education, implies a strong commitment to research in education.

Research Comments in Text

Although recommendations certainly are the most powerful statements made by a commission, the narrative in any report also has significance. Thus, the fact that A Nation at Risk does not have any recommendations related to research is underscored by the further observation that there is no suggestion in that report that research might be of value in assisting to ameliorate education's problems. On the other hand, A Call for Change contains numerous references to research and research utilization and to the importance of research in education.

A Call for Change contains the following references to research:

1. The third assumption, page one. "Third, teaching is a complex human endeavor guided by knowledge that is both scientific and artistic. . .Using a knowledge base acquired through study, research, and practice, teachers continually make complex decisions about the curriculum, the students, and instruction."
2. The fifth assumption, page two. "Fifth, the education of prospective teachers will continue to be centered in colleges and universities, which provide structure for the systematic study of organized bodies of knowledge as well as the

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scholarly inquiry and intellectual discourse that are integral to the education of all professions."

3. Page twelve. "Third, they (prospective teachers) need to receive systematic instruction in the organized research and experience-based information about teaching, and know how to use the knowledge being generated through research on teacher and school effectiveness."
4. Page twelve. "Prospective teachers also need experience teaching in real and simulated circumstances, and to have this teaching analyzed and criticized in accordance with educational science and pedagogical information that is taught in their college or university classes.
5. Pages 14 and 15. ". . . teachers should have both the skills to teach and the knowledge of the research and experiential bases for those skills. . ."
6. Page 19. "Our recommendation is for programs that are more selective; courses that are intellectually more demanding and more closely tied to the expanding research base. . ."
7. Page 21. "The faculty required in quality teacher education programs, faculty who have skills and experience in teaching, research, and supervision. . ."
8. Page 22. A full paragraph of text begins "Progress in any profession depends on the information and products of research and development." The remainder of the paragraph describes recent progress in educational research and discusses the importance of support for research, development, and dissemination activities.

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9. Page 27. "For instance, teachers might work in. . .cooperative research and development projects."

10. Page 29. "Research indicates that . . ."

11. Page 29. "The profession needs evaluation research to clarify the effects of staff development."

Research Suggestions

Materials related to the Commission's activities constitute a fertile source for suggestions for research on teaching and teacher education. Although the report itself does not concentrate on this issue, it does have numerous references to the need for research and the need to use research information now available in teacher and administrator education programs. On the other hand, both the seminar papers and the testimony given at hearings are filled with direct suggestions for research and research use as well as with implications for research.

This section of the report is divided into two parts. The first part contains direct suggestions made in testimony at the hearings. The second part is a preliminary formulation of a research program based on a combination of suggestions and implications drawn from general comments, opinions, and assumptions about what we know and do not know.

List of Suggestions, with Sources

The following suggestions about research are from the hearings, where those persons who appeared could make any statment they desired. Because the seminar papers were intended to build from a research base, their perspective was different

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from the hearing papers; research references in the seminar papers did not have the same spontaneous value as those in the hearing papers. Thus, these suggestions all are from the hearing papers.

Use of the knowledge base. At least ten persons (Blackman, Boucher, Dandridge, Dishner, Frankl, Holley, Mitchell, Scott, Warren, Zims) referred to the need of teacher education to use the expanding knowledge base. Comments ranged from Mitchell's statement that there should be an integration of research and clinical practice, to Holley's that there should be a strong emphasis on research in teacher education programs, to Dishner's claim that there is little evidence that research information is used extensively in state college and university programs. Three of those who testified (Frankl, Hasentab, Petrie) reported, approvingly, that we have research information about teaching. On the other hand, Scott said that our scientific base is limited.

Three persons (Mitchell, Preston, Scott) said that teacher education faculty should be more actively involved in research, with Preston suggesting that there should be a research and development center for teacher educators. Christensen stated that the nature of the research process should be changed with more emphasis being given to ethnographic processes.

Three persons (Dilworth, Godfrey, Nielsen) said that we do not have enough information to justify the use of tests as the only criterion for selection into teacher education. Weinstein called for research to evaluate teacher education progams and the

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alternatives being proposed; Warren recommended that IHEs connect their research to school identified problems.

This number of comments about research, when it was evident that persons from the outside who commented about teacher education did not have that on their minds, is illuminating. (More than one fourth of those testifying explicitly mentioned research, even though there was no particular suggestion that this would be a topic of interest to the Commission.) Of perhaps equal interest is that the utilization of research information was mentioned as often as the content of research. Also of interest that three of those who mentioned research were not from education or teacher education.

Structures

This section of the report is intended to give some preliminary structure to the research implications from various reports and statements given to the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education. The report is not intended to exhaustive or to duplicate other, much more thorough approaches to research in education or teacher education, e.g. Lanier (1984). Furthermore, much of the structure presented here was derived from assertions of belief or assumed fact rather than from suggestions for research. And, finally, this structure is not presumed to be "new;" indeed, most of the ideas have been discussed at length elsewhere. Instead of being new, this structure is what came from the papers and hearings.

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Description--Implicit in the entire structure that follows is the notion that we need much more simple descriptive information about teacher education and teacher educators as well as school administrator programs and those who operate them.

Program--Technology/Understanding--One of the significant phenomena of this period in teacher education has been the formation of two groups of sophisticated philosophers, psychologists and curriculum designers who have expressed themselves in opposition to each other. An important aspect of their opposition, however, is that each of these groups appears to attribute to the other the present "deplorable" state of the least impressive teacher education programs. A group who emphasize the importance of the "expanding knowledge base" (e.g. Berliner, 1984; Scott, 1984; Smith, 1984) and talk about a technology of teaching (Berliner, 1985) argue that the present state of teacher education results from inadequate attention to specific teaching and managment techniques that have proved to be successful. A second group (e.g. Greene, 1984; Lanier, 1984; Petrie, 1984) maintain that those committed to competency-based teasching have taken over the profession and that we need more emphasis on preparing reflective teachers, those who use and try to instill higher order thinking skills.

In fact, most of teacher education exemplifies neither ideal. Instead, most programs are made up of a collection of eclectic courses; they have no serious conceptual identity. Both of the previously mentioned groups have built straw persons

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whom they then destroy. What it needed is not a set of experiments in which these two extremes are matched against each other, however. Instead, we need to explore rather thoroughly the results of introducing various of the "technologies" that Berliner describes. (Perhaps we will find, as Selby said of technology, as it usually is defined, in her hearing paper, "it opens minds.") We also need to study what happens when we "educate for reflection" as described by Greene (1984). And we should investigate whether those taught technologies of teaching can then be helped to use those technologies in the reflective manner suggested by Greene and others.

Both Gideonse, and sometimes Howey, seem to attempt a rapprochement between these perspectives. Significant support should be directed toward conceptual, descriptive, and eventually, experimental, attempts to merge these two major lines of thought.

Essential Entering Characteristics--In addition to Swartz's (1984) seminar paper, several persons referred extensively to recruitment and selection. Apart from the Schwartz paper, the prime concern was with criteria for selection. Warren advocated more careful attention to selection. Several persons (Dilworth, Godfrey, Petrie) maintained that paper and pencil testing has not been demonstrated to have a substantial relationship to teaching performance, and they, along with P. Smith described the negative impact that reliance on tests alone has on the minority population in teaching. Frankl and Gelb both advocated use of

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multiple indicators for selection. All of this suggests the need for more research about both the value of selective admissions and the sorts of indicators that should be used in any selective admissions process.

Program Location--University/Center/Local District -- Hasenstab spoke positively about the deregulation of teacher education, the opening of alternative means of certification. Anrig advocated the substitution of a year-long internship for traditional teacher education programs, an alternative that already is available in New Jersey, as described by Carlson, "The Teacher Certification Struggle--New Jersey." Galambos reported on the substitution of testing for teacher education programs as the means to certification, and Haberman described results of earlier substitution of alternatives to regular programs of teacher education. Saunders reported the Memphis State alternative to its traditional program. Frankl maintained that what is needed is not non-higher education alternatives to teacher education but improvement of those teacher education programs that are located in colleges and universities. Behling described and advocated state program approval as the means for controlling the quality of teacher education; Kunkel described voluntary accreditation through NCATE.

With all of the furor about the quality of teacher education and the "need for alternatives," it is amazing that more is not being done to track the outcomes (not simply success/non-success) of both standard programs and alternatives to those programs.

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Comparative, descriptive studies are needed of teacher certification and certification within occupations having similar educational requirements, e.g. engineering, social work, pharmacy, and architecture. Also of value would be detailed, descriptive studies of processes used by, mistakes of, thought processes of, longevity in the profession, etc. for beginning teachers who entered the profession by a variety of routes, as would descriptive studies of alternative support systems for new teachers who "arrived" via various routes. These and many other sorts of studies are needed for our guidance both through the coming shortage crisis and in planning future programs.

Resources for Teacher Education--The Commission arranged for papers dealing with the availability of resources to teacher education (Peseau) and the need for resources in programs of teacher education (Nutter). A number of other persons also spoke about the availability of resources (Weinstein) and the need for additional human and material resources (Eagan, Hasenstab, Weinstein).

In fact, we have very little information about either the resources available to teacher educators, the use made of available resources, or what resources are needed to optimize programs. Even Peseau's landmark study was limited to state universities and, within them, financial amounts devoted to teacher education and, in some instances, other undergraduate programs in these same institutions. We have almost no information about the availability and quality or the actual use

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of space, personnel, video equipment, projectors (movie, slide, overhead, etc.), microcomputers, both standard and curriculum libraries, computer search facilities, etc.

Descriptive studies are needed of the current resource availability and use in various sorts of teacher education institutions; analytic studies also are needed of what resources are required to have a good program, with attention being given to whether these vary among different sorts of programs and institutions.

One of the resources that was mentioned by a number of persons (Andrew, Burnham, Saunders, D. Smith, Warren) was time for teacher education. Some maintained that a minimum of five years is essential. In order to illuminate the possible need for more time, descriptive research should be conducted on the nature of standard four-year programs as well as extended programs. The studies should consider both program content and outcomes. Again, the nature of the outcomes shoud be the focus of these studies, not their success or non-success

Related to the length of the program is its continuing nature. Dandridge, Griffin, Hannon, and Wallace all discussed the importance of considering the career-long nature of teacher education. Exemplary programs, with good follow-up information, are available in many districts, e.g. reports by Dandridge, Hannon, and Wallace; special consideration needs to be given, however, to the adaptation of such programs to smaller, and sometimes isolated, schools.

Program Content--The content of teacher education programs was the focus of a number of papers and presentation. Both Petrie and Jones discussed the contribution/non-contribution of liberal arts to teacher education; Ringler spoke of the importance of writing to prospective teachers; Gelb described the Bank Street advisement program; Andrew wrote of the details of New Hampshire's five-year teacher education program; Pooler advocated a team approach to the education of teachers; and Hall and Doyle described productive relationships between higher education and schools in the development and implementation of teacher education programs. The reports and testimony of these and many others suggest the importance of detailed descriptions of a variety of programs as well as the systematic design and "evaluation" of new ones.

Research Utilization--The Commission's report referred a number of times to the importance of research utilization in teacher education programs, and, as mentioned above, a number of those who provided testimony attended to this same issue. In his invited paper, B. O. Smith also stressed research utilization. Of all of those who talked about the importance of building newly developed research information into teacher education programs, only Warren and Kluender suggested a way of doing this. Warren suggested that teacher education institutions work together in consortia to study the research and consider its applicability to various parts of their own programs. Kluender described a consortium -- the Nebraska Consortium for the Improvement of

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Teacher Education -- already two years old that is doing just that. The present NIE planned contracts dealing with research utilization represent an important step toward moving teaching/learning research information into teacher education programs. However, research should be conducted on other approaches, e.g. consortia, to encourage the consideration and of research information at the individual program level.

Administrator Education--Although the Commission's primary responsibility was teacher education and most of those who prepared papers and gave testimony limited their discussion to this topic, several stated that unless administrator preparation is improved, better teacher education will not achieve its goals. Sutman said that there is too much inbreeding in educational administration and suggested that much of their preparation program should be taught by persons from outside of educational administration and that a management approach should be fostered; Burnham recommended concentration on organization leadership education; Eagan said the educational administration preparation program should be expanded.

Additional Issues--Three additional issues that were mentioned by one or two persons warrant consideration for research. Both Spillane and Petrie suggested that consideration be given to the importance of union contracts for the improvement or non-improvement of teaching and teacher education; Griesemer recommended that teacher educators use market research techniques in determining the nature of their programs and the selection of

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students into those programs; Sutman raised the matter of teacher educator program quality. Each of these issues seems worth preliminary examination as research areas of possible importance.

Concluding Statement

Most of the reports of the past few years about education and teacher education have not attended seriously to research. Prior to the release of A Call for Change, only the NIE's conference on the Teacher Shortage in Science and Mathematics and the CCSSO's report Staffing the Nation's Schools: A National Emergency treated educational research seriously enough to suggest that at least partial solutions to education's problems might be found through educational research. Thus, it is especially gratifying that the National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education, as well as those who presented papers and gave testimony, treated educational research seriously enough that two of the Commission's sixteen recommendations dealt explicitly with research and that much of the text also recognized the increasingly important role of research in education. Furthermore, almost all of the seminar papers made explicit reference to research and a full one quarter of those who testified mentioned either research or research utilization. This suggests that many of those in teacher education or closely allied with it recognize the centrality of research to the further progress of the profession.

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